

Bangkla Baptist Hospital administrator, Suphachai Wiratsombat, gives the hospital report at the annual meeting of the Thailand Baptist Mission meeting in Pattaya. On the left is missionary Donald Phlegar who moderated the meeting. Don is from Yazoo City, Mississippi. On the right is parliamentarian missionary Dan Cobb. Seen in the background are other Thai nationals who also gave reports at the meeting. — (Photo by Maxine Stewart)

“Don’t be salt in a sack”

By Maxine Stewart

At a recent meeting of the East Thailand Baptist Pastor-Leaders-Missionaries Group, Suphachai Wiratsombat, hospital administrator of the Bangkla Baptist Hospital, summed up his new philosophy of Christian living by the admonition, “Don’t be salt in a sack!” He shared his testimony, showed how God had brought him to this point of view.

He had only a 12th grade education, and had been a Christian for less than a year, when God brought him and missionary doctor Orby Butcher together at the Christian (Overseas Missionary Fellowship) hospital in Saiburi, in south Thailand in 1963. He was visiting his brother; Butcher was visiting Christian hospitals in Thailand. Suphachai felt God’s call in Butcher’s invitation to go to work as business manager at Bangkla hospital.

Suphachai moved to Bangkla, and helped prepare for the opening of the Baptist hospital in March 1964. He has proven himself to be a faithful steward, on the hospital staff. He was elected hospital administrator when missionary Earl Goatcher resigned in 1970. He has been loyal to God’s call to serve at the hospital, even to the extent that he turned down a U.S. Army job at twice the salary he was making in 1972.

After Suphachai married a local Bangkla girl, Jirapon Saengthai, in 1966, he began to make a place for himself in the small city of 10,000 population. He quickly gained the respect of the (largely Buddhist) community by his good work and loving spirit in the hospital. In the past 10 years, several people had asked him about running for the city council, but he had the feeling that Christians should ‘stick together’ in their own group to keep out the worldly influences rather than to participate in “worldly activities.”

Various friends, however, continued to invite him to get involved in city politics. He later came to see how wrong his previous attitude had been. God gave him two passages of Scrip-

ture (John 17:14-18 and Matthew 5:13-14) which made him realize that he should no longer be “salt in a sack,” but should get involved in city affairs. In 1986, he joined with some business men in forming the “Volunteer Development Party” and was elected vice-mayor for the city of Bangkla. Since then, he has divided his time between the hospital and city hall, doing a full-time job in each position.

Suphachai praised the Lord for giving his scriptural answers to voters’ questions during the campaign and for wisdom in doing his job as vice-mayor. He has applied Christian humility, love, and discipline in supervising the city sanitation crew and firemen (80 workers). He has also had the opportunity to eliminate the corruption in the purchasing of fire-fighting equipment, road machinery, and other high-priced equipment for the city. He is having more and more opportunities to witness for Christ at city hall as people see his Christian integrity in financial dealings and his sacrificial concern for the needs of his co-workers and for all the citizens of Bangkla.

In addition to his ministry and witness in Bangkla, Suphachai has become one of Thailand Baptists’ chief spokesmen to business and professional people and to government officials.

When Suphachai got married, he and his bride moved in with her parents, a common practice in the small town where the extended families often include four generations in a household. This was to be the arrangement until they could accumulate enough money to build their house. His (Buddhist) father-in-law said he did not know how his friends would take to the idea of him having a Christian living in his house (although his daughter was already a professing Christian). With a broad smile on his face he said, “Not only do they not object, they even come and ask his advice!”

Maxine Stewart is missionary press representative for Thailand.

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, April 21, 1988

Published Since 1877



April 24

Life Commitment Sunday

Missionary Ray Register (right) surrendered to lifetime Christian service during a Baptist Student Union retreat while he was in college. About a year later he felt called to foreign missions. Here Register listens intently as Motasem Badran in Israel reads the Koran to him. In a few minutes

Register will open his Bible and share an appropriate witness with Badran. “I haven’t found any truths in the Koran that are not already in the Bible in a clearer way,” says Register, who concentrates on developing a witness to Muslims. (FMB) PHOTO By Joanna Pinneo

Editorials . . . by Don McGregor

The restoration act

Since both houses of Congress have passed what is known as the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1988, the bill was vetoed by the President, and the veto was overridden by Congress, there has been a great deal of speculation about the act.

Because of the interest in the bill on the part of churches and other religious organizations, the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs has prepared a brief fact sheet about the legislation.

There are five points to the Baptist Joint Committee's list.

First, the Civil Rights Restoration Act applies only to organizations that receive federal funds. Baptist churches should not be affected.

Second, the act has nothing to do with gay rights.

Third, colleges and universities that receive direct or indirect federal funding through student loans and other such programs are entitled to an exemption if they are "controlled by" a religious organization.

According to Oliver S. Thomas, general counselor for the Baptist Joint Committee, "This exemption has been interpreted broadly to include institutions indirectly controlled by the church. Thus, separately incorporated

Baptist colleges that have their trustees appointed or approved by the state convention have received exemptions. In fact, in the 16 years that the religious tenets exemption has been in existence, not a single religious institution has been denied an exemption."

Thomas continued, "Despite the favorable interpretation that has been given to this exemption, the BJCPA supported a broadening of the statutory language to include all institutions 'closely identified with the tenets of a religious organization.' The effort failed largely because no institution has yet been denied an exemption. If a legitimate request for an exemption is denied in the future, the BJCPA has laid the groundwork for corrective legislation."

Fourth, Baptist hospitals will not be forced to perform abortions. The Danforth Amendment, which was supported by the Southern Baptist Convention in St. Louis in 1987 and by the SBC Christian Life Commission and by the Baptist Joint Committee, overrules the Title IX regulations that had placed abortion on an basis with other medical disabilities. Thus the Danforth Amendment guarantees that no institution will be forced to perform

abortions simply because of receiving federal funding.

Fifth, the act will enable victims of discrimination to seek relief as they were able to do before the Grove City decision in 1984. This means that civil rights laws will apply to all of the programs and activities of institutions that receive federal funding. Previously only the areas in which the federal funds were applied were affected.

What all of this should mean, according to the Baptist Joint Committee, is that Baptist churches and their institutions should not have their right to use discrimination in hiring affected. In other words, they should be able to hire Baptist people in good health in areas where that is a critical need. And never should they be forced to hire persons with communicable diseases. If this right should be denied, the Baptist Joint Committee has already laid the groundwork for making changes.

And even if a college or a university or a hospital is receiving federal funds under some condition, it should be able to apply for an exemption to the civil rights acts and be exempted if its trustees are elected by its convention.

Liquor advertising still pending

The Mississippi State Senate voted to kill the alcohol advertising bill, HB 1034; but by some parliamentary maneuvering allowed for just such circumstances, the bill is still alive and is back in the House for approval of a Senate amendment.

Actually, the Senate's version is a total amendment to the House version, but the number designation was left the same — HB 1034. By a vote of 26 to 25, the amended bill was killed in the Senate. To keep it alive, however, there was a motion to reconsider the vote. An effort to table the motion to reconsider, which (tabling) would have killed the bill again, lost by a vote of 19 to 31. Then on the reconsideration, the bill was passed by a vote of 27 to 23. As can readily be seen, of the 52 senators, only one failed to vote when the bill was killed. When it was finally approved, two switched and two didn't vote. That is the way it works in the Legislature.

The bill is now back in the House for consideration of the amended version. Interested persons need to get in touch with their representatives immediately to urge them to vote against the bill.

Those who stood firm against the bill to the end in the Senate were Blanton, Bryan, Burkes, Canon, Crook, Gordon, Graham, Guerieri, Hale, Harpole, Miller, Mills, Morgan, Musgrove, Posey, Scoper, Shows, Smith, Tate, Thames, Usey, White, and Wicker. They are due our appreciation.

The advertising of alcohol will serve to increase the consumption of alcohol. That is the reason for advertising. We surely don't need increased consumption. The rationale used has been that advertising is coming into the state anyway in other publications. But it will not help to have alcohol advertised in Mississippi media, which will include radio and television with great audiences of children and young people.

This concept comes up every year and has been defeated every year. Let's not let this year be an exception. Once we have allowed advertising to begin, it will not go away.

God's inerrant Word

By Herschel H. Hobbs

Sanctify them through the truth: thy word is truth (John 17:17).

Of the Bible, "The Baptist Faith and Message (1963)" says, "It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter."

These words were borrowed from the 1925 Statement of "The Baptist Faith and Message," which, in turn borrowed them from the 1833 New Hampshire Confession of Faith; but they were not original with that statement.

According to Hugh Wamble (Midwestern Seminary) they are founded in a letter written in September 1703 by the English philosopher John Locke. A young preacher wrote him asking advice as to how he might have a successful ministry. Locke wrote him to preach the Bible for "it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter."

Of course, inerrancy refers to the autographs, the original manuscripts. Someone said, "but I have never seen the autographs." Another replied, "I have never seen Jesus Christ, but I believe in him." So like other deep spiritual experiences, it is a matter of faith.

istence in others."

The Peace Committee report primarily addressed the divergent views and beliefs of employees of our seminaries. When there are differing views between a seminary professor and a large number of Baptists who support him through the Cooperative Program, the only question is who shall impose whose beliefs on whom?

Through the centuries a few insignificant copyists' errors have crept into copies of later manuscripts, but they do not affect the message. Reverent biblical scholarship has largely removed these.

The Bible is not a textbook in history, the sciences, philosophy, psychology, for example. But where it speaks on these subjects it speaks truth.

For instance, when both theology and science are properly interpreted, there is no conflict. I have lived long enough to see once-disputed passages verified by the findings of science, especially archaeology. Where problems still exist, I am convinced that they are due to lack of information or of our understanding. I am willing to wait — and believe.

Jesus prayed that the Father would "sanctify" (dedicate, set apart for God's service) his apostles "through faith" [Greek text]: "thy word is truth." You do not need to discard your intellectual honesty when you read and study the Bible or hear it preached. For it is God's authoritative, inerrant word.

Herschel H. Hobbs is pastor emeritus, First Church, Oklahoma City.

Who calls the tune, the piper or those who pay the piper? Liberty of conscience only protects the conscience of the individual, not his actions in imposing his beliefs on the consciences of his students, contrary to the consciences of those who pay his salary.

Two examples illustrate the point, one almost from our denominational (Continued on page 5)

Guest opinion . . .

A confessional people

By Carl D. Ford

More and more today, one hears that Baptists are not a creedal people. However, we certainly are a confessional people. A partial list of Baptist confessions of faith include Helwys' Declaration of Faith (1611), London Confession of Faith (1644), Second London Confession (1689), Charlestow Confession (1665), Philadelphia Confession (1742), New Hampshire Confession (1830), and the Baptist Faith and Message of 1925 and 1963.

I confess to not knowing the difference between a creed and a confession of faith. I understand that creed means "I believe" in Latin. If so, then the only difference between the two terms is one of context and understanding. Baptists believe that no human statement has equal or superior authority over the Bible, but so did the other Protestant denominations coming out of the Reformation which adopted confessions of faith. Baptists have always believed that a creed is not binding over the individual's conscience, especially when imposed by the state or ecclesiastical hierarchy. Surely a person's conscience would lead him to join a church whose creed

or confession he could believe. I suspect what we mean is that due to our denominational structure, no authority outside of the local church can impose a belief or creed on an individual Baptist or a local church. A local Baptist church has always maintained the right to test the beliefs and practices of its pastor and members by whatever creedal standard it chooses, and associations have maintained the right to disfellowship any local church whose beliefs and practices differ from the majority. Certainly local churches acting denominationally have always had the right to impose creeds upon its created institutions.

One of the reasons for the proliferation of Baptist confessions of faith has been, in the words of the Minnesota Baptist Confession of 1952, "to distinguish between Baptists within Baptist ranks." Almost from the beginning, Baptists both in England and America have differed on the questions of missions and between Calvinism and Arminianism. Many confessions have been written either to distinguish between the differences between these areas or to bridge the

gap between these differing views. All of these confessions set out a high view of scripture. It is only in recent times that the question of confessions and differing views of the nature of scripture have been questioned.

James Boyce and Basil Manly Jr., two who were instrumental in founding Southern Seminary, clearly knew the distinction between the autonomy of the local church and the nonautonomy of its creation, its various institutions. Boyce proposed and Manly wrote Southern's Abstract of Principles in 1858, which all professors at that institution were required to sign.

Boyce was adamantly against any professor having mental reservations or private understanding concerning the signing of the confession of faith or thinking that he had the liberty to modify its principles. To the expected charge that a confession of faith was not required of a local church in scripture, he replied that, even if true, a seminary is not a church. Boyce pointed out that creeds have universally been used by Baptists in a twofold manner as ". . . the declaration of faith and the testing of its ex-

The Baptist Record

VOLUME 112 (ISSN-0005-5778)
Published weekly except weeks of July 4 and Christmas. Subscription \$7.35 a year payable in advance. Second class postage paid at Jackson, Mississippi. The Baptist Record is a member of Southern Baptist Press Association.

NUMBER 11

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1st missionary made to leave Indonesia

By Marty Croll

JAKARTA, Indonesia (BP) — The first in a string of Southern Baptist missionaries expected to be required to leave Indonesia because of new visa restrictions flew to the Philippines in early April. She will work there for about a month while considering options for future assignment.

Doris Blattner, 54, from St. Louis, left Indonesia after the internal security section of the country's Religion Department would not supply a letter necessary for her to live there.

Because of the government policy, about half of Southern Baptists' force of some 95 missionaries may have to leave the country during the next year.

As with other Christian missionaries whose ability to stay hinges on annual approval through the country's Religion Department, Blattner was notified more than a year ago that she would be denied visa approval the next time she applied.

Meanwhile, the government has indicated it will consider visa exten-

sions for four theological educators and their families. These missionaries are in positions that will be taken over in a few years by Indonesian Baptists now studying in the United States.

Many missionaries, told they will be denied visa renewals during the next couple of months, have begun applying to immigration officials in their areas for three-month temporary extensions. The family of Gerald Pinkston, an English-language pastor in Jakarta from Levelland, Texas, received such an extension and was allowed to stay past a Feb. 24 visa expiration until scheduled furlough in May.

For several missionaries, an extra three months would afford time to pack, wind down their work and attend the mission's annual meeting this summer. But local immigration offices can deny such a request if they choose, as they did with Blattner.

Indonesian Baptists are just past the midpoint of a campaign to start

(Continued on page 7)

Honduras violence takes missionaries off streets

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras (BP) — Missionaries stayed close to home April 11 after days of scattered anti-American violence in Honduras' two largest cities.

"We had a quiet weekend," said Southern Baptist missionary Carl Rees in Tegucigalpa. "We're waiting to see if it's normalized or if it's the quiet before the storm."

The Honduran government declared a state of emergency April 8 in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula after an attack on the American embassy and a resulting fire the day before left five people dead. The next day, riot police and demonstrators fought while students and other groups vented their hostility toward the United States in connection with

the extradition of a suspected major Honduran drug dealer. Two Americans were stabbed.

Rees, of Springfield, Mo., is chairman of the 41 Southern Baptist workers assigned to the country. He said no missionaries had been targeted by demonstrators, but Southern Baptists were staying off the streets.

"We've had a lot of phone calls from nationals who've told us to stay in, to be careful where we're at," Rees reported.

Missionaries also canceled the scheduled visit of a Southern Baptist volunteer work team. The U.S. State Department warned Americans not to travel to Honduras until conditions improve.

Trustees vote to sell ACTS network

By Al Shackleford

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — Trustees of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission have voted to transfer operation of the ACTS television network to a new Texas for-profit corporation, Friends of ACTS Inc.

At their regular meeting April 12, commission trustees approved in principle a memorandum of agreement for the sale and authorized their executive committee to negotiate the definitive agreement, with final approval by the full trustee board.

Jimmy R. Allen, president of the commission since 1980, told trustees he will resign his position and manage ACTS for the new corporation "if this transfer is accomplished and if I am asked."

In a statement to the trustees, Allen said: "I am convinced that ACTS is the key to assisting the churches in

reaching the nation with the gospel and must continue to function effectively. For that reason, I believe it is vital that the network be managed by someone who thoroughly understands its purpose and operation."

Under the provisions of the memorandum of agreement, at closing on or before Sept. 15, the RTVC would receive \$10 million for equipment, program films and videotapes, licenses, satellite contracts and property on which the Dallas-Fort Worth satellite uplink is located and \$1 million for production of programs for ACTS. In addition the RTVC will receive:

— A \$23 million note, payable at \$2 million annually plus interest, for use in production of programs for ACTS.

— A 3 percent override of Friends of ACTS "gross receipts" for 30 years.

— Five hours per day of air time on ACTS without charge for 30 years for

The Second Front Page The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Published Since 1877

National Baptists will take over seminary

By Tim Nicholas



Johnson

Brogan

The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Executive Committee last week approved a plan to turn over the entire work of the Mississippi Baptist Seminary to National Baptist trustees.

The seminary, which operates a central campus in Jackson and 23 extension centers around the state, has been since its inception in 1944, a center of theological education for black ministers and laymen.

Southern Baptists in the state have aided in its funding and have jointly operated it with National Baptists. The seminary has had two black presidents and three white ones, with Richard Brogan, who is white, currently serving.

The Executive Committee approval follows passage of a plan put forth by the Bi-racial Commission which operates the Seminary. That plan calls for the Mississippi Baptist Convention to hand over seminary operation to the nine National Baptist trustees on Dec. 31, 1988. The Bi-racial Commission will be dissolved. The MBCB and Home Mission Board will fund 75 percent of the seminary's operational budget through the end of 1989, at which time all funding will cease. That amount is just under \$120,000. And the MBCB and HMB will split the payoff of half the seminary's building debt with a total not to exceed \$80,000.

The Bi-racial Commission has elected seminary dean Hickman Johnson, who is black, as president-

elect. Current president Brogan will return to the convention board staff next January as a consultant in the Cooperative Missions Department dealing with black church work, metro missions, and seminary extension.

Johnson, who is pastor of Farish Street Baptist Church in Jackson, is a graduate of Tennessee State University and earned the master of divinity degree from Morehouse School of Religion at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, and the master of arts degree with a major in religious education from Mississippi College.

The Executive Committee's recommendation will be presented to the full convention board in August. It is from the convention board that the white representatives of the Bi-racial Commission are elected.

Earlier this year, according to a report to the Executive Committee by Earl Kelly, executive director of the MBCB, some of the black supporters of

Mississippi Baptist Seminary had begun to divert funding to Natchez Junior College which is operated by the black General Baptist Convention. One of the black trustees of the seminary had asked to be relieved of his duties because of differing philosophies at the seminary.

In recent years the seminary, which is unaccredited, had dropped its awarding of degrees in favor of a certificate program. Approximately 500 black students are enrolled yearly at the central campus and at the extension centers. Brogan reported that from 1977-86, a total of 883 persons received either certificate, diplomas, or degrees from the seminary. New Orleans Seminary operates an extension program at the seminary which has a majority of white students enrolled. That program will continue in Jackson, perhaps at the seminary, perhaps elsewhere.

Kelly and Chester Vaughn, MBCB program director, met with several seminary and National Baptist leaders to discuss resolution. Kelly noted that when the seminary began no blacks were able to attend Mississippi's public or private colleges or a Southern Baptist seminary. All of those doors are open today. "The Mississippi Baptist Seminary was created to address a problem which no longer exists," said Kelly in a background paper prepared for the Executive Committee.

At that point the discussion revolved (Continued on page 5)

since it was launched during the 1984 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention. When the Executive Committee approved the application for the \$10 million loan with a 10-year payback, it was pointed out ACTS "had been confronted with large expenditures" to start the network.

At that time, it also was noted ACTS would "require long-term, ongoing expenses beyond those which can be supported by the Cooperative Program allocation."

In addition to large costs to keep the network operating, ACTS has not been successful in various fund-raising efforts. At one point, Executive Committee members were told ACTS had spent \$600,000 more on fund-raising efforts than had been raised.

Trustees spent nearly six hours April 11 discussing the proposal in an informal "workshop" session and then approved it unanimously during their

meeting April 12. In addition to approving in principle the transfer of ACTS to Friends of ACTS, the motion as passed requested "that full communication to the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee and all interested publics within the Southern Baptist Convention be conducted with candor and sensitivity."

During discussion of the proposal, trustees were assured Friends of ACTS will honor contracts which the RTVC has with local ACTS boards. These contracts allow the local boards to use the network to air up to 25 hours of programming per week. This time will not be counted against the 35 hours per week that Friends of ACTS will allot to the RTVC.

Allen told trustees the ACTS network had reached a plateau in its growth due to the current climate in the cable industry. The major cable (Continued on page 5)

Southern trustees add conservative prof

By David Wilkinson

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—In back-to-back votes, Southern Seminary trustees added a conservative New Testament professor to the seminary's faculty and awarded tenure to a theology professor who has been a target of conservatives in the denomination's theological controversy.

The actions were hailed by seminary President Roy L. Honeycutt as evidence of "a new spirit" reflecting the trustees' support of the seminary's efforts to be "an agent of reconciliation" in the troubled denomination.

In the final session of their April 11-13 annual meeting on the seminary campus in Louisville, Ky., trustees voted unanimously to add David S. Dockery, professor of theology and New Testament at Criswell College in Dallas, to a position as assistant professor of New Testament. Dockery was awarded a contract without tenure, effective with the completion of his doctoral studies.

Asked to provide background on the search process, Honeycutt told trustees he had given the faculty search committee "an unprecedented directive." Any recommendation had to be consistent with his announced commitment to add to the School of Theology "someone who would represent the view of the more conservative" segment of the denomination, he said.

Dockery met that requirement, he said, adding, "He is a Southern Baptist scholar . . . who will bring a different perspective to our faculty."

In contrast to Dockery's election, which required less than two minutes of discussion, the vote on tenure for theology Professor Molly Marshall-Green followed nearly two hours of discussion about her theological views.

The vote of support — 45 for, seven against and three abstentions — came after Honeycutt issued a personal appeal on her behalf, urging trustees to approve tenure as an indication of their willingness to "reach out in both directions." Marshall-Green, 38, is the first female professor of theology to be awarded tenure in any of the Southern Baptist Convention's six seminaries.

The vote also reflected a turnaround in support for the recommendation.

Before the final session began, several conservative trustees had said at least 19 board members planned to vote against the recommendation. With two-thirds approval required, only 17 votes were needed to defeat it.

During debate, however, several trustees said they had changed their minds from the previous day, while others said just before the vote they were still uncertain about how to vote.

For several years some critics have charged Marshall-Green with espousing "universalism," a doctrine that all people come under God's grace and will receive salvation. The criticism stemmed from Marshall-Green's 1983 doctoral dissertation at Southern Seminary.

During the meeting, primary opposition was voiced by Arkansas pastor Mark Coppenger and Kentucky layman John Michael Michael read an eight-point summary of statements in the dissertation that he said were "clearly in violation" of the Abstract of Principles, the seminary's governing theological statement. The dissertation "holds that one can be saved without knowing of, or believing in, Jesus Christ," he said.

Coppenger said Marshall-Green's views are in conflict with the abstract's section dealing with the "total depravity of mankind." He told trustees, "My position is that her understanding of the Bible does not square with this document (the abstract)." Trustees "must insist" that faculty members "affirm the clear meaning of the Abstract of Principles propositionally as true," he added.

James Monroe, retired Florida pastor and chairman of the trustees' academic personnel committee, read a written response from Marshall-Green to each of the eight criticisms voiced by Michael. He also read a brief statement of student support signed by the current and immediate past presidents of the student body. Throughout the discussion, about 120 students stood silently at the back of the room to demonstrate their support of Marshall-Green.

In presenting the recommendation, Monroe noted the committee had chosen unanimously to recommend tenure for Marshall-Green after meeting with her in a session "that to my knowledge in the 10 years I have served as a trustee was the most extensive and thorough interview ever held with a faculty member regarding any matter coming before this board of trustees."

The committee's conclusion was that Marshall-Green's "basic convictions and her teaching are in accordance with the Abstract of Principles and the Baptist Faith and Message," he said.

Monroe said Marshall-Green, in her dissertation, "dealt in a scholarly way with the troublesome question" about the fate of people who have never heard the Christian gospel. "It is our conviction that though Dr. Marshall-Green interprets some Scriptures in a way that might be different from many of us, that she has a very high view of inspiration of Scripture, that she has a very high view of the lordship of Jesus, and believes without question that salvation comes only through an expression of faith in him," he said.

Georgia pastor Jerry Mahan said Marshall-Green had "satisfied me on every question" during the committee's interview. Noting, "I am an errantist's inerrantist," he said it "would be a tragedy to deny her tenure based on what I fear is our misunderstanding of a thesis she wrote five years ago."

Echoing a concern voiced by several trustees, Tennessee pastor Wayne Allen said he felt uncertain

(Continued on page 5)

Floridians bumped for 'acceptable' nominees

By Greg Warner and Jack Brymer

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (BP) — One Florida member of the Southern Baptist Convention Committee on Nominations abandoned a "prayerful agreement" to nominate four Floridians to SBC trustee posts in favor of four nominees approved by conservative leaders, his colleague has reported.

After agreeing in January to a slate of Floridians to serve as new SBC trustees, Gene Whiddon of Fort Lauderdale broke his agreement with Jacksonville evangelist James Ponder, the other Floridian on the committee, and offered an alternate slate to the committee when it met in Nashville March 17-18.

Whiddon did not consult Ponder, who arrived late for the meeting after finishing a revival in Columbus, Ga., Ponder said.

According to several committee members, Whiddon told the committee the first slate was not acceptable to his pastor, O.S. Hawkins of First Church, Fort Lauderdale.

Among people deemed unacceptable was outgoing state convention President Bill Coffman, who was replaced as a trustee nominee of Southwestern Seminary by another former president, Max Cadenhead of Naples.

Whiddon also replaced two Florida laymen from the agreed list with other nominees, Ponder said. The committee voted to accept those three replacements, but rejected one other Whiddon recommendation in favor of the original nominee.

All four Floridians eligible for re-election as trustees were approved.

A ninth Floridian from the original list was elected without challenge from Whiddon.

The first sign of disagreement between the two Floridians on the Committee on Nominations came from Whiddon, who through his secretary released a statement about the committee's work to the Florida Baptist Witness April 1. "It is unfortunate that the two Florida representatives did not come to an agreement on the nominees for the various trustee vacancies," the statement said in part.

Ponder, however, said the two reached an agreement, and Whiddon broke it. "We prayerfully agreed to nominate the four from Florida eligible for re-election and agreed upon nominees for the four open positions and two at-large positions who were very representative," he said when contacted by the Witness, newsjournal of the Florida Baptist Convention.

The original slate of nominations was signed by Ponder and Whiddon and sent as requested to committee Chairman Joseph Knott III of Raleigh, N.C., in January.

"Late on the evening before the nominating committee meeting in March," Ponder said, "the other committee member from Florida informed me by telephone that after discussion with people both inside and outside of Florida, he had made preparations without consulting me to present

a totally new group of nominees.

"Although we talked and prayed by telephone (March 16) and met during the committee meeting in Nashville, he was unwilling to work toward a joint group of nominees from Florida. I prayerfully honored the agreement we had originally made of Florida nominations."

Arriving for the second day of the committee's meeting, Ponder asked the group to replace Whiddon's four alternate nominees with four from the agreed list. The committee replaced one.

Ponder refused to name the Floridians nominated, but Whiddon listed them as recipients of carbon copies of the statement he sent to the Witness.

Their identities were confirmed from committee members outside Florida.

Whiddon replaced the original nomination of Chiefland lawyer Luther Beauchamp to the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board with Danny Strickland, pastor of Parkway Church, Orlando.

The nomination of former state Sen. Ed Price of Bradenton to the Southern Seminary board was replaced with Jim Ballard, a retired engineer in First Church, Merritt Island.

Whiddon's substitute nomination of Larry Adams, vice president of Florida Power and Light from Coral Gables, to the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission was unsuccessful in replacing Velma Daniels, a television show host from Winter Haven.

No challenge was offered to the previously agreed nomination of Tallahassee real estate developer J. Tee Williams Jr. to an at-large position on the SBC Public Affairs Committee.

Cadenhead, pastor of First Church, Naples, was listed in January as an at-large nominee for Southeastern Seminary's board. Instead he replaced Coffman, Ponder's pastor at Arlington Church, Jacksonville, as a nominee to Southwestern Seminary's board.

Both Whiddon, in his prepared statement, and Ponder praised all the nominees as qualified and cooperative. "It's not a question of nominees," Ponder said, "since there are a great multitude of potential nominees from Florida churches. I regret the flawed procedure that allows confusion in the nominating process."

But Whiddon reportedly told the committee that after consulting with Hawkins he realized he had not adequately investigated the Floridians before agreeing in January to nominate them. He told members the names he presented were developed without consultation with Ponder.

"If he had not made it clear I'm not sure we would have known they were different," said Jimmy Towers, a committee member. "I asked him, 'Are those your nominations or Butch (O.S.) Hawkins' nominations?' He seemed embarrassed by the question and then said they were his."

Whiddon, owner of a Fort Lauderdale

lumber company, did not respond to repeated requests by the Witness to discuss the committee's work or to explain why the first nominees were unacceptable. Hawkins, a trustee of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and a leader in the effort to move the denomination in a more conservative direction, also did not respond to telephone calls.

Committee Chairman Knott would not comment on reports he and Whiddon discussed Whiddon's plan to offer a substitute slate of Floridians. "I'll let him talk to you about that," said Knott, who formerly served in the U.S. Attorney's office in Raleigh with two other conservative leaders — Samuel Curran, chairman of the Public Affairs Committee, and William Delahoyde, a trustee at Southeastern Seminary.

Whiddon's last-minute maneuver was one of several committee actions that brought protests from some members. Several told the Witness SBC politics dominated many of the committee's decisions during the March meeting, when more than 200 Southern Baptists were approved as nominees to denominational service. All nominations must be approved by the Southern Baptist Convention in June.

The Committee on Nominations, which meets only once a year, is composed of two people from each qualified state Baptist convention. They are elected to one-year terms and serve solely to nominate trustees to openings on the boards that control SBC agencies and institutions.

Most of the trustee positions are assigned to states, and nominations from individual committee members for openings in their states customarily are accepted by the full committee with little opposition.

This year, however, state representatives were asked to submit their nominations, along with biographical data on each, two months early to Knott.

(Continued on page 5)

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Meridian pastor resigns, to retire

Seal
W. Otis Seal, pastor of Calvary Church, Meridian, for 31 years, announced to his congregation on April 3 that he plans to retire, effective August 1 of this year, and submitted his resignation.

Seal, a native of Pearl River County, has completed 43 years in the ministry. Before going to Meridian, he was pastor of First Church, Itta Bena, for six years. In earlier years he had been education director at First Church, Picayune, and then at First, Columbus.

A graduate of Mississippi State University, he studied at Southwestern Seminary and at New Orleans Seminary. William Carey College conferred on him an honorary doctor of divinity degree. During World War II, he served three years overseas in Africa and Italy.

He and Mrs. Seal, the former Jacqueline Edwards, have two children, Alton Otis Seal, a doctor of veterinary medicine, and Mrs. Ann Seal Schroeder, elementary school principal at Clarkdale Attendance Center, Lauderdale County.

Some positions in which he has served Mississippi Baptists are as president of the State Training Union Convention; president and pastor advisor of the state Religious Education Association; member of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and its Executive Committee; member of the Board of Ministerial Education; and on convention committees such as the state evangelism committee, the Committee on Order of Business, the Committee on Committees, and the Pioneer Missions Committee.

A confessional people

(Continued from page 2)
beginning and one more recently. Recognizing that his views on the inspiration of scripture had changed over his 10-year tenure at Southern Theological Seminary, and being called on by President Boyce to teach according to the abstract of Principles which he signed and to teach without referring to his theories of higher criticism, Crawford Toy offered his resignation in 1879. Presumably he hoped it would not be accepted and the trustees would allow a deviation from the seminary's Abstract of Principles to allow him to teach his modern views, which were compatible with Darwinism. His resignation was accepted with only two dissenting votes by the trustees.

It has been reported recently in the Baptist Press that a missionary to the Jews left the Home Mission Board because of his belief that Jews had no need of Jesus Christ for a personal Savior. That he could hold and practice those views and remain a Baptist as long as a local church called him as a pastor or as its missionary, there is no doubt, as there is no doubt that he could properly be terminated as

Seal has preached for revivals in 11 states and several countries. In India he preached to crowds as large as 35,000, with more than 2,000 professions of faith recorded. As a writer, he has contributed articles to Baptist Sunday School Board publications and has written two books, one a history of his home church, *103 Years of Trial and Triumph*, and a book of sermons, *This Is the Work of God*.

He set up a ministerial library to aid young preachers at William Carey College in sermon preparation. Also he established a scholarship fund for preachers students at Carey.

At Calvary, his leadership was responsible for the establishment of Calvary Christian School which has operated since 1964, and has Grades 1-8. Also the church operates a kindergarten for ages 4 and 5, plus a day care center.

During Seal's pastorate, Calvary has changed locations from 41st Avenue and Paulding to Eighth Street and changed its name from Forty-First Avenue to Calvary.

Seal's hobby of riding and raising good horses was inherited from his parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents. The hobby grew into a business of raising registered American quarter horses. This led to halter and performance horses which have won in some of the largest and most prestigious shows in America, and have produced many champions. In this side-line business advertisements have carried the logo: "When you take God into your plans, you better make your plans mighty big." Seal states that this business has furnished "years of the greatest opportunity to witness for our Lord and His Christ." Raising horses is what he said he plans to do in his retirement years, "as health and strength permit."

long as he is subsidized by those who hold differing views. He left rather than be transferred from his mission post to the home office.

Liberty of conscience does not and never has entailed the right to be employed and paid either by a local church or by any Baptist institution. A pastor must teach views acceptable by a majority of the congregation or he stands to be replaced. The exercise of liberty of conscience always has and always will be accompanied by bearing the responsibility and accountability for ones actions.

Carl D. Ford is an attorney in Laurel.

Southern trustees

(Continued from page 4)
about how to vote.

"I am in a dilemma," he said, noting Honeycutt "has given outstanding leadership toward trying to listen and respond and be fair . . . and he's paid a great price for this. It's weighing on me that maybe some of us need to pay a price. This issue goes far beyond a professor and tenure."



Secretaries install officers

Officers of the Mississippi Baptist Secretaries Association were installed at Camp Garaywa, April 11. Pictured, from left, are Betty Anne Bailey, Jackson, president; Tinie Slade, Bayou View Church, Gulfport, first vice president; Fae Ross, Yalobusha Association, Oakland, second vice president; and Sarah Majure, Greenfield Church, Greenville, secretary-treasurer.

Trustees vote to sell ACTS

(Continued from page 3)

Companies prefer not to use a network channel owned by a single denomination, he said.

Representatives of Friends of ACTS said they would organize a board with multi-denominational representation that would be committed to operating in line with ACTS' original stated purposes. Chip Atkins Jr. of San Antonio is the founder of Friends of ACTS.

The new organization has contracted for a transponder on Galaxy III satellite, and ACTS will begin transmitting on the new satellite May 1.

In other action, commission

trustees approved its response to the Southern Baptist Peace Committee, noting, "We are committed to the Baptist Faith and Message and continue to secure our personnel who work in ministry opportunities with the commission with this in mind."

Harold T. Brundige, an attorney from Martin, Tenn., was elected chairman of trustees. Other officers elected were First Vice Chairman Michael S. Hamlet, pastor of First Baptist Church, North Spartanburg, S.C.; Second Vice Chairman Russell Lawson, a banker from Oklahoma City; and Recording Secretary LaVerne Butler, pastor of Ninth and O Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky.

Mrs. Rouse was the first woman ever to serve on the Order of Business Committee of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. She served as president of Mississippi Women's Cabinet of Public Affairs, president of the Southern Literacy Festival, and president of the Mississippi Division of American Association of University Women.

Mrs. Rouse wrote the chapter on Mississippi writers in a history of Mississippi edited by the late R. A. McLemore, former president of Mississippi College.

Floridians are bumped

(Continued from page 4)

When the committee met in March, a handful of members then offered alternate nominees for positions in states other than their own, in what several committee sources described as an "orchestrated" effort to elect trustees committed to the conservative agenda in the denomination.

Most of the challenges were approved.

Towers, pastor of Crossroads Church, San Antonio, told the Witness about 80 percent of the committee voted to accept the alternate nominees in "almost an automatic kind of response. There were very few members that evidenced any kind of independent thinking."

By referring to a nominee's belief in inerrancy or "the cause" begun in the denomination in 1979, committee members were almost assured of a favorable vote for a nominee, Towers said.

The one exception, as Towers recalled, was the election of Daniels of Winter Haven to the Radio and Television Commission over Whiddon's nomination of Adams. "That's the only one I can remember where the committee voted any exception to the fundamentalist perspective," he said.

Warner and Brymer are associate editor and editor, respectively, of the Florida Baptist Witness.

Seminary will go . . .

(Continued from page 3)

ed around transfer of operation of the jointly-built seminary facilities on Lynch Street in Jackson to the black trustees, making it a totally black institution. The 18 member Bi-racial Commission voted the recommendations which were also approved by the

MBCB Executive Committee.

Kelly reported that Mississippi Baptists have budgeted a total of \$3,823,587 for work with National Baptists since the mid-1940s, most of which was channeled to the Mississippi Baptist Seminary.

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Hams net on-air fellowship Sunday afternoons

By Larry Cox

Baptists are known for meeting. But what about a Baptist group that "meets" every Sunday afternoon, yet seldom sees each other face-to-face?

The Mississippi Baptist Ham's Fellowship is such a group.

They "meet" every Sunday afternoon when "net control" (either Charles Thornton, Crystal Springs, or Betty Dobbs, Philadelphia) "calls the roll," asking for check-ins to see who is listening in.

And all of it is done over-the-air, via amateur radio sets.

After a devotion and prayer requests, the "hams" spend time in prayer. During the remainder of their meeting they discuss

fellowship business, mission projects, contacts with missionaries, equipment, their families, churches, and associations.

According to Thornton, who currently serves as president, the fellowship was organized in 1981 and has an active membership of 50.

The fellowship was born out of a need for a communications system for the Mississippi Disaster Relief Team. The fellowship now staffs radio personnel when the disaster relief team is called out, and on some occasions, has provided the only contact to the outside world from a disaster site.

Gary Keen, an industrial engineer from Philadelphia, became interested in ham radio five years ago through his pastor, Eugene

Dobbs. Now Keen, his wife, Sue, and two children are all licensed radio operators.

Keen relates that most fellowship members have some kind of radio contact with foreign missionaries. Some foreign countries have a three-party agreement allowing a member of the fellowship to talk directly to a missionary on a third-party's radio in the country where the missionary serves.

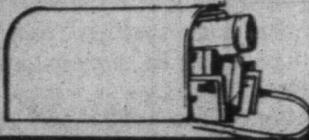
Several members of the fellowship spend free-time "patching" missionary kids in the USA with their parents on a mission field. And many missionaries with aging or ill parents in the states appreciate weekly radio contact with a ham in the USA to receive up-to-date reports on the condition of their loved ones.

Mississippi Baptist Ham's Fellowship also helps missionaries to purchase radios and parts, and to obtain licenses. Ken Bowie, an agricultural evangelist in Peru, was recently presented a ham radio by the fellowship.

The Mississippi fellowship is part of the National Fellowship of Baptists in Communications.

The national communications fellowship organized in late 1987. Ham radio operators are a part of this fellowship. Its purpose is to involve communicators in world missions and provide a clearing house for communication skills and technology.

Other states that have amateur radio fellowships are Alabama, California, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Texas.



Letters to the editor



Letters to the editor must be limited to 300 words and the editor reserves the right to trim those that are longer. Editorial prerogatives must be reserved under all circumstances, and the opinions of the letter writers do not necessarily reflect the views of the staff of the Baptist Record. Only signed letters will be used, but the writer may request that his name be withheld.

Why Las Vegas

Editor:

At a time when Christians in general, and Gulf Coast Baptists in particular, are being assailed from every direction by proponents of legalized gambling I was extremely distressed to learn that our 1989 convention will be held in Las Vegas of all places!

How can we justify asking our legislators to stand up against the current effort to legalize the operation of the Europa Star in the gulf when thousands of Baptist dollars will be dumped into the coffers of the hotel/casino owners in Las Vegas next year in the form of hotel room rent and who knows what else?

I learned of the choice of conventions sites today from a non-Baptist who said that it looks like "you Baptists" are talking out of both sides of your mouths. I as much as called him a liar, then, after calling the associational office to check the report, had to profusely apologize and to agree with his assessment.

I strongly urge you to take an editorial stand against the site of the 1989 Southern Baptist Convention remaining Las Vegas. I also urge your readers to actively campaign to have this location changes without delay!

Please send me the addresses of Baptist papers serving other states so that I can write to their editors voicing my concern on this subject.

Jack D. Melton
Cowan Road Baptist Church
Gulfport

The Southern Baptist Convention voted in 1983 during the session in Pittsburgh to have the 1989 meeting in Las Vegas. Since then there have been several unsuccessful attempts at conventions to change the location. We now have contractual obligations with the meeting hall and other entities in the city. It is too late to change.

The statement adopted by the Pittsburgh convention was "The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention recommends that, in view of the imperative to penetrate the nation with the claims of Christ, the Southern Baptist Convention set the

direction of Bold Mission Thrust for the last decade of the century with a strong evangelistic emphasis in connection with the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1989;

"The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention recommends that the Southern Baptist Convention select Las Vegas, Nevada, as the Convention site for the 1989 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention and that the dates be established as June 13-15, 1989."

The idea is to take the gospel to Las Vegas and to Nevada, and the Baptists out there are looking forward to the help that the visitation of other Baptists will bring about.

Those Baptist visitors, however, need to pass right on by the slot machines lined up in the hotel lobbies. If gambling activity does not drop off sharply while the Baptists are there, the effort will have been to no avail and will have actually harmed the cause for which they will have been there.

Nevada Baptists and the Home Mission Board are laying plans already for evangelistic efforts during the weeks preceding the convention.

Surely the thousands of Southern Baptists who will be there, hopefully many of them to participate in revival efforts before the convention, will be going to combat the evils of gambling and not take part in them. — Editor

Distribution of scripture

Editor:

I am happy to enclose for your information a copy of the American Bi-

ble Society's Report of Denominational Support for 1987. Before all else, may I express our heartfelt thanks to you and all the people of the Southern Baptist Convention for your commitment to the worldwide Bible cause in 1987.

You will see from the report that support for this global ministry of scripture translation and distribution comes from all the principal Christian denominations in America. This is due, in part, to the impartial, quality service we seek to provide the churches in this country and their overseas missions, now reaching 180 countries and over 600 languages.

You will note, however, that there was a significant decline in total denominational support to the work of the Society during 1987.

This is a sad and worrisome fact since it has occurred at a time when we are seeking to respond to a growing global demand for copies of God's Word. This demand is coming from churches and missions with which your denomination is affiliated and is reflected in the unprecedented scripture distribution totals recorded last year. In the United States, the ABS was called on to provide 116,155,119 copies of scripture, an increase of 15.6 percent over 1986. And through the United Bible Societies, the ABS shared in the distribution of 624,053,932 copies of God's Word worldwide, an increase of 4 percent over the previous year.

Please be assured of our deep gratitude for the support which your church has provided for our ministry during 1987. As mission partners with you in service to the Word, we pray that you will find it possible to increase your support of this ministry in 1988.

If the Society can provide special assistance to the work and witness of your churches and missions this year, please do not hesitate to contact us.

And, again, thank you.

Alice E. Ball
General Secretary
American Bible Society

Southern Baptists, through the convention, gave \$255,073 in 1987 compared with \$272,277 in 1986. That is a decrease of \$17,204. In total gifts the American Bible Society received \$1,750,435 in 1987 compared with \$1,844,407 in 1986. That is a decrease of \$93,972. — Editor

Mark of Caligula

Editor:

The Southern Baptist Advocate newspaper is at it again. Their annual issue has arrived in the office of most Southern Baptist churches (whether ordered or not). The purpose of this issue is to set the tone for the SBC and to inform everyone as to who the "right" man is for the presidency of the SBC. It is indeed ironic that they cry out against "trouble makers" on the front page, and yet it seems that the proposition of most of their articles is to cause trouble. They know just the right words to use to play on people's fears and to provoke their anger.

This paper is indeed an advocate, but not for Southern Baptists. They are the advocate of their own ideology and political agenda. They operate in violation of the letter and the spirit of the Peace Committee's recommendations by politicking to promote their "man" for the presidency of the SBC and seeking to discredit anyone they think could pose a threat to their success.

I hope that Southern Baptist pastors, staff, and laity who have been exposed to the Advocate and its views can see through their smoke screen of concern for our convention and can see this paper for what it is.

Their goal is not peace but to divide us even further by fueling the fires of conflict and distrust. The information that they disseminate sends people to the convention filled with anxiety, fear, and ready for a fight. We ought to be able to go to the convention confident, relaxed, and ready for fellowship with all Southern Baptists.

Playwright Eugenie O'Neill, spoke of "the mark of Caligula" as being a tactic used to control people by keeping them in fear. In his play, Lazarus Laughed, he said that Emperor Caligula hated Lazarus because he had taken away the fear of death. I would hope that the mark of Caligula that is upon our convention could be removed and we could all develop relationships based on trust.

Bert Breland
Greenwood

Sermons for book

Editor:

For anyone who wants to broaden his ministry, here is a great opportunity. I am seeking pastors who wish to submit a manuscript for publication in my new book. To the Family and Friends. The book will consist of funeral sermons given in the heat of the battle against sorrow. These should not be prepared sermons for a book but actual messages delivered during recent funeral services. They may be of any type, specific or general. Pastors should keep in mind that the length should be no less than four double spaced pages and no more than six.

The sermons will be received through May from any Mississippi pastor or other Christian worker. All proceeds from the book to be published will go to the Mississippi Baptist Children's Village. Sermons should be addressed as noted below.

Jerry Mixon
P. O. Box 408
Winona, MS 38967

Associational officers interpretation meet set

The annual Associational Officers Interpretation Meeting is scheduled for May 17, and at Alta Woods Church, Jackson. The meeting will begin at 9:30 a.m. and dismiss at 3 p.m.

The purpose of the meeting is to interpret suggested 1988-89 church associational programs and to equip the associational leader to plan a program of associational work; and to

equip the associational leader to conduct an interpretation meeting for church councils in his association.

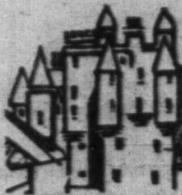
The following persons are invited from each association to attend the meeting: directors of missions, moderators, associational Sunday School directors, associational Church Training directors, associational Church Music directors, associational Brotherhood directors, associational

missions development directors, associational stewardship directors, associational evangelism directors, associational pastoral ministries directors, associational family ministries directors, associational church media library directors, and associational Christian Action chairmen.

Separate conferences will be provided for each of these positions. Since

the meeting will deal with the 1988-89 church/associational programs, those persons who attend should be the ones who will be serving next year. Special recognition will be given to the associational teams which are 100 percent in attendance.

Contact the program director, Chester Vaughn, at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board for further information.



Faces and places

by Anne Washburn McWilliams



Here and there

"There will always be a Judson"

On Saturday, April 9, Mama and W. D. travelled with me to Judson College, where I hoped to see some members of my Class of 1950. Judson, America's oldest Baptist women's college, is this year celebrating its sesquicentennial. It was spring pilgrimage time for many magnificent old homes in Marion, their lawns glorified with dogwood and azalea petals. (The Judson president's home, completed in 1910 and now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. N. H. McCrummen, features an original Tiffany stained glass window.) But we only stayed long enough to see the historical pageant, "There Will Always Be a Judson." Last fall this was presented at the Alabama Baptist Convention and this spring at the Alabama WMU convention. It was written by Bob Curlee, pastor of Centercrest Baptist Church, Birmingham, and husband of a Judson graduate.

Judson was named for Anne Hasseltine Judson, wife of Adoniram Judson, early missionary to Burma. The college was founded in 1838 by members of Siloam Baptist Church in

Marion (where later the Home Mission Board, SBC, was organized). Judson was given to the Alabama Baptist State Convention in 1843. Milo P. Jewett, the first president, later founded New York's Vassar College.

Judson today offers study in more than 30 academic fields. One of those is a minor in equine science — the science of horses. One hundred percent of Judson applicants to medical schools have been accepted.

The first licensed psychiatric social worker in the U.S. was a Judson graduate; Southern Baptists' first foreign missionary appointed to Japan was a Judson graduate. The first woman to serve on the Alabama Supreme Court attended Judson.

In the late 1830s, when the trustees wrote their first report, they said that the purpose of "the Judson" would be "to give young ladies every facility for acquiring a thorough, practical, and useful education, one that shall furnish the head and improve the heart . . ." It seems to me that that purpose still holds.

Thanks to J. Edgar Simmons

It was not until I got the most recent newsletter from the Department of English at Mississippi College that I knew about a reunion held June 13, 1987, of Professor J. Edgar Simmons' former students. Mr. Simmons, now deceased, taught creative writing at Mississippi College — I don't know the number of years — but I had the good fortune to study in one of his night classes in the late 1960s.

The reunion was held in the Gold Room of the B.C. Rogers Student Union Building. Professor Simmons' two sons, Jes, who is also a poet, and Eddie provided memorabilia of their father, including a scrapbook, taped lectures, and his two books of poetry. Participants shared how Professor Simmons had influenced their writing and teaching careers. Steve Owen, one of the former students, and now head

of the English Department, Meridian Junior College, reports, "All participants concluded that Simmons was a great teacher who had a wonderful talent for encouraging creativity and conveying his deep passion for good literature."

Professor Simmons helped me, more than any other professor, book, or workshop had ever done, to look at my own work and criticize it. He helped me to see the value of relaxing and just being me — of writing like I talk. From a list of words he gave us, we wrote our memories connected with those words, and kept them in what he called a "commonplace book." That taught me to use memories to help me turn on my emotions. I've found many ideas for columns in that book.

He wrote Ds and Fs all over

everything I turned in at first. Since I had previously thought I was a fair writer, that hit me hard. But that was what I needed, and often still need. When I finally got a few As and Bs from him you'd better believe I treasured them!

"Be implicit," he said over and over. "You don't have to tell everything you know!" That's one lesson I haven't remembered well enough.

I can see him now, his chair tilted back against the chalkboard. If I could speak to him, I'd like to say, "Thank you, Mr. Simmons."

An open check

A couple of weeks ago David Gomes of Rio, Brazil, was an overnight guest at our house. I drove him to First Church, Yazoo City, where he was to speak at prayer meeting. On the way he told me a story about his oldest sister, Conceicao, who died a few years ago.

Conceicao married a man who was not a Christian. But as a result of her prayers and example and witness, her husband accepted Jesus, and afterward became a kinder husband and a better provider. His death preceded hers. The two had no children. In her later years, Conceicao lost her eyesight, but not her deeply rooted Christian faith. (I met her in Belo Horizonte in 1978, after she had become blind, and I remember how much all her relatives seemed to love her.)

It was not until after her 80th year, David said, that Conceicao cashed her first check! Then someone gave her a check for her birthday and did not write in the amount. They told her, "You may decide what you want to buy with it, and fill in the amount you want it to be for."

Next morning, after she received the check, her face glowed as she told David, "I was so excited I could hardly sleep all night. I was trying to decide what I wanted, and what figure I'll write on the check."

As David said, "Our salvation is like an open check. God gives it to us freely, but we have to fill it in ourselves before we can cash it."

By Mary Lee Carraway
"Does he not see my ways and count my every step?" (Job 31:4).
 I have a confession to make. For years I had a hang-up about the word *bless*. Like many others I was quick to ask God to bless this endeavor or that one. Yet in the back of my mind, I questioned the efficacy of this invocation. I supposed that God understood, but to me, it seemed like some generic religious expression born of laziness.

"We'll pray you home," our friend Cathy promised in January 1985, as my husband, my son, and I prepared our exodus from Alaska. "We'll need it," I thought, already dreading the 900 miles of ocean and 3,000 miles of mid-winter driving in a 24-foot U-Haul affectionately designed the "Beastie."

For five days on board the MV Malaspina, we churned southward over the black deepness of the sea. Suspended in the very midst of God's creation, cradled between ocean and mountain, I recalled from Job: "But these are only hints of his power, only the whispers that we have heard."

As we left Seattle, we took a moment for prayer. "Bless us," we prayed. In the Cascades Mountains of Washington, with frightening names like Man's Pass, we were surrounded by an abundance of winter — ice, mist, ghostly snow-clad trees. But the roads were bone dry.

"Amazing!" I exclaimed. "Just like the Red Sea." The comparison stayed with me mile after mile, through Idaho, Utah, Wyoming, Kansas. With all the world around us dressed in God's frozen breath, not once did we encounter treacherous highways, drifting snow, impossible weather, or any of the scary what-ifs of my imagination.

Ironically, two days after we reached my brother's home, a paralyzing storm descended, trapping us in a refrigerated world. Protected and indolent in a warm house, I finished writing in my journal.

After describing the beauty of the trip, relishing its safe conclusion, and noting the humor of coming all the way from Alaska to an ice-encased Mississippi, I wrote, "I am convinced that God led us every step of the way. We were so lucky."

Then I stopped. Lucky? No, we had not been lucky. We had been blessed! Mary Lee Carraway is a freelance writer and a member of First Church, Lucedale.



Peter Rabbit is painted on the wall.



First, Greenville has a "tree house."

Missionary must leave Indonesia

(Continued from page 3)

500 new churches by 1990. Without Southern Baptists, missionaries say the well-established Indonesian Baptist convention should be able to maintain existing churches and institutions.

Muslims have exerted a growing pressure on the Indonesian government as Islamic nationalism has solidified in recent years among the 80 percent Muslim constituency. But a few weeks ago the country swore in a new cabinet, placing some Christians in high government ranks.

Marty Croll writes for the Foreign Mission Board.

Peter Rabbit lives next to the tree house at First, Greenville

Peter Rabbit lives under the rainbow in the Children's Media Center at First Church, Greenville!

Several years ago, due to space problems, the children's books were moved from the church library to the children's Sunday School Department. As time passed, walls needed painting and shelves became crowded. The lighting was inadequate. Under leadership of Iris Mitchell, chairman of the Church Library Committee, and Leann Morton, church media library director, plans were made to redecorate the room. Except for electrical work and ceiling paint, church members did it all.

Barbara Williamson painted Peter Rabbit murals, "a la Beatrix Potter," on three walls. Iris Mitchell created a rainbow across one wall. Each quarter Becky Wineman prepares a mediography of resource materials for the teachers in the Children's Sunday School Department. During scheduled visits to the media center, classes hear a story or see a filmstrip related to that day's lesson topic.

Thursday, April 21, 1988

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 7

Devotional

Not lucky

By Mary Lee Carraway

"Does he not see my ways and count my every step?" (Job 31:4). I have a confession to make. For years I had a hang-up about the word *bless*. Like many others I was quick to ask God to bless this endeavor or that one. Yet in the back of my mind, I questioned the efficacy of this invocation. I supposed that God understood, but to me, it seemed like some generic religious expression born of laziness.

"We'll pray you home," our friend Cathy promised in January 1985, as my husband, my son, and I prepared our exodus from Alaska. "We'll need it," I thought, already dreading the 900 miles of ocean and 3,000 miles of mid-winter driving in a 24-foot U-Haul affectionately designed the "Beastie."

For five days on board the MV Malaspina, we churned southward over the black deepness of the sea. Suspended in the very midst of God's creation, cradled between ocean and mountain, I recalled from Job: "But these are only hints of his power, only the whispers that we have heard."

As we left Seattle, we took a moment for prayer. "Bless us," we prayed. In the Cascades Mountains of Washington, with frightening names like Man's Pass, we were surrounded by an abundance of winter — ice, mist, ghostly snow-clad trees. But the roads were bone dry.

"Amazing!" I exclaimed. "Just like the Red Sea." The comparison stayed with me mile after mile, through Idaho, Utah, Wyoming, Kansas. With all the world around us dressed in God's frozen breath, not once did we encounter treacherous highways, drifting snow, impossible weather, or any of the scary what-ifs of my imagination.

Ironically, two days after we reached my brother's home, a paralyzing storm descended, trapping us in a refrigerated world. Protected and indolent in a warm house, I finished writing in my journal.

After describing the beauty of the trip, relishing its safe conclusion, and noting the humor of coming all the way from Alaska to an ice-encased Mississippi, I wrote, "I am convinced that God led us every step of the way. We were so lucky."

Then I stopped. Lucky? No, we had not been lucky. We had been blessed! Mary Lee Carraway is a freelance writer and a member of First Church, Lucedale.

Missionary news



Terry and Kathy Sharp, former Mississippians, are now missionaries in Brazil, in Santa Catarina. Before being appointed to Spain in 1982, they served on staff of First, Hattiesburg. After medical resignation in 1983, they served on staff of First, McComb. After Kathy's health improved, they were re-appointed in 1986. (Their address in Caixa Postal 5133, 88.041 Florianopolis, Santa Catarina, Brasil.) He is state youth consultant/evangelism and she is a state missions leader and active in her local church. They are pictured with David Gomes, pastor of Church of Hope, Rio, and his wife Haydee.

Steve and Ruth Robertson, journeymen to Nigeria, have arrived on the field to begin their two-year term of service as a chaplain/discipleship leader and a teacher/nurse (address: P.O. Box 635, Jos, Nigeria). He was born in San Antonio, Texas. The former Ruth Murphy, she was born in Ponfotoc, Miss. Before they were employed by the Foreign Mission Board in February 1988, he was a bookkeeper at MacArthur Surgical Clinic and she was a nurse at Rapides

General Hospital, both in Alexandria, La.

Scott Valentine, journeyman to Japan, has arrived on the field to begin his two-year term of service as a student worker in the Kyoto Friendship House (address: Superiorohru Iguchi 201, 35, Rinkah-sho, Kami Takano, Sakyō-ku, Kyoto-shi 606, Japan). He is a native of Vicksburg, Miss. Before he was employed by the Foreign Mission Board in February 1988, he was graduated from Mississippi State.

Ballet Magnificat to perform in Jackson

Ballet Magnificat, will perform on Sunday, April 24 at the Leavell Woods Methodist Church, Jackson. The performance, sponsored by Leavell Woods Methodist Church, will begin at 7 p.m. and will feature several new works from the company's repertoire.

Ballet Magnificat was founded in August of 1986 by Kathy Thibodeaux, principal dancer with Ballet Mississippi (formerly the Jackson Ballet) for ten years. Thibodeaux was a silver medal winner at the II USA International Ballet Competition in 1982. In 1986 she announced her resignation from the local professional company in order to form a company which could utilize the expressive qualities of dance to share her faith in Jesus Christ. In the first year of operation the company has appeared in more than 100 performances from south Florida to Southern California, and been invited to several foreign countries.

Admission for the event is free.

Homecomings

First, Louise: May 1; Morris Jones, a former interim pastor will speak at 11 a.m.; dinner will be served.

Harmony (Carroll): homecoming, April 24; 10:30 a.m.; revival, April 25-29; 7:30 p.m.; Rick McKay, pastor, Valley Hill, evangelist; Rick Ralston, pastor.

Bethesda, Crawford: Apr. 24; Wilson Winstead, former pastor,

Preaching-worship conferences coming

Gene Garrison, Bill Causey, and Graham Smith will be the principal speakers for a series of preaching and worship conferences in May.

The three meetings will take place in three cities: May 9 at Second Church, Greenville; May 10 at First Church, Pontotoc; and May 11 at First Church, Laurel.

These meetings are designed to provide training for worship leaders in working together effectively in planning and conducting congregational worship.

Gene Garrison is pastor of First Church, Oklahoma City. Bill Causey is pastor of Parkway Church, Jackson. And Smith is director of the Church Music Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

The three meetings have identical programs, each beginning at 9 a.m., concluding at 3:20 in the afternoon.

Garrison will speak on "The Centrality of Worship," "Finding and Filling Illustrations," and "Variety in Biblical Preaching."

Causey will speak on "The Audacity of Preaching," and "How to Plan for and Give a Good Invitation."

Smith will speak on "Planning for Worship," and will lead an individual conference on "Music in Worship."

Other individual conferences will be "The Sermon: From Idea to Delivery," by Causey; and "The What and How of Series Preaching," led by Garrison.

Host will be Julius Thompson, director of the Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Department, MBCB, Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205. Registration by mail to the above address is requested.



Media library officers meet to plan

Officers of the state church media library organization met at the Baptist Building April 12 to finalize plans for the 17th annual Church Media Library Conference to be held at First Church, Brookhaven, Nov. 4-5. Left to right, officers are, seated, LeAnn Morton, Greenville, president; and Carolyn Hulsey, Kosciusko, vice president. Left to right, standing, are Margaret Perkins, Columbus, program chairman; Margaret Keith, Jackson, secretary-treasurer; Juanita Hight, Louisville, publicity chairman; and Agatha Sandidge, Brookhaven, historian.

Conference leaders already confirmed include Jack Lewis, Barbara Freese, James Rose, and Jean Adkinson, Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville; Phyllis Tadlock and Kathy Sylvest, state library workers in Louisiana; and Janet Jordan and Beulah Lewis, First Church, Jackson.

For the first time this year, early bird conferences will be held. They will be Friday morning, Nov. 4, from 10 to 12, for any who wish to arrive that early. The conference officially is to begin at 1 on Friday and end at 12 on Saturday, Nov. 5. Chester Swor will be the banquet speaker.

Names in the news

Kreole Ave. Church, Moss Point, has awarded Sunday School attendance pins to the following members: Winnie Neal, 35 years; Ruby Jackson, 15 years; Cecil George, 14 years; Wesley George, 12 years; Leslie George, 12 years; Bertha Moody, 2 years; and Nell Smith, 1 year.

Danny Crowe, formerly pastor of West Marks Church, is president of the Pennsylvania-South Jersey Baptist Convention. Since 1983 he has been pastor of Pittsburgh Baptist Church, the oldest Southern Baptist church in the state. He is a graduate of Mississippi College and Mid-America Seminary. He and his wife Rebecca have five sons.

DALLAS (BP) — Gary Cook, a 37-year-old minister/educator, was elected president of Dallas Baptist University in a special called meeting of the trustees at the school April 6.

Cook was the unanimous choice of the seven-member search committee who considered more than a dozen people for the job and was elected by a unanimous vote of the trustees.

Cook, director of denominational relations and special assistant to the president of Baylor University in Waco, Texas, will assume the DBU presidency almost immediately and preside over graduation exercises this spring.

He succeeds W. Marvin Watson who resigned last October after serving as president since 1979.

Staff changes

Jackie Winters, a native of Natchez, has been called to Main Street Church, Hattiesburg, as minister of childhood education, effective March 1. Miss Winters is returning to the state from a similar position at First Church, Tuscaloosa. She is graduate of Carey College and Southwestern Seminary. Russell Bush is pastor.

Philip Price has accepted the call of Sylvarena Church, Raleigh, as minister of music and youth, effective March 20. Price is a graduate of William Carey College, and presently attends New Orleans Seminary, where he is a music major. He formerly was minister of music of First Church, Polkville. Robert Jackson is pastor.

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Just for the Record

Sylvarena Church, Raleigh, will have Dedication Day and homecoming services, May 1. The church has recently relocated, building a new sanctuary and educational facility on Highway 18 west.

The morning service will begin at 10:45 a.m. with Earl Kelly, executive director-treasurer, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, as featured speaker for the dedication. Dinner will be served in the family life center at 1 p.m. and an afternoon homecoming service will begin at 2 p.m. Former pastors and staff members will appear in the afternoon service, and music groups from First Church, Jackson, will present a mini-concert.

Revival results

First, New Augusta: March 27-April 1; James Messer, staff evangelist, Shiloh, Saraland, Ala.; nine professions of faith; other decisions; Robert Cooper, pastor.

Revival dates

Oak Grove (Smith): April 24-27; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; D. J. Benson, pastor, Salem Heights, Laurel, evangelist; Danny Holifield, minister of music, Bethlehem, Laurel, music evangelist; Thomas Cheeks, pastor.

Sunrise, Carthage: April 29-May 1; Frank Smith, pastor, evangelist.

First, West Point: April 24-27; Bob Norman, Tennessee, preacher; Russell Newport, Missouri, music; services, Sunday 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 12:30 p.m. preceded by noon meal; 7 p.m.; Jackie Hamilton, pastor.

First, Coffeeville (Yalobusha): April 24-29; Ron Kirkland, pastor, First, Batesville, evangelist; Joe Meurrier, Sardis, musician; Truman D. Scarborough, pastor.

Dumas (Tippah): April 24-27; services nightly at 7 p.m.; James Lewis, pastor, Fifteenth Avenue, Meridian, preaching; Peggy Davis, praise leader; Don Pucik, pastor.

Big Level, Wiggins: April 24-29; Donnie Guy, evangelist; Terry Hurt, music evangelist; David Grisham, pastor; Sunday services, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Fri. 7:30 p.m.; homecoming, May 1; Allan Moseley, former

Annual homecoming for Puckett Cemetery Association will be held April 24, at Puckett Baptist Church, Puckett. Activities will begin at 11 a.m., with lunch on the grounds following the service. Former resident, Philip Hardwick, will be speaking.

First Church, Canton: will have dedication for its sanctuary, education, and office suite, April 24, at 10:45 a.m. C. Z. Holland, Louis Smith, and Harvey Webb, pastor, will be preaching, and Rick Green in charge of the music. Dinner on the grounds will follow services.

Film wins Golden Torch

TAIPEI, Taiwan — "A Gift of Love," a feature film produced by Taiwan Baptists, has received the Golden Torch award for best religious videotape. The International Catholic Organization of the Cinema and Audio-Visuals in Asia presented the award to film writer-director Christine Mao and Southern Baptist missionary Jerry Clower.

Sunday, March 6, officially marked the beginning of Oakland Grove Church, Laurel, celebration of its 50th year.

The Jubilee calendar of events consist of Easter Sunrise Service, which was held April 3, with James Shumate (a former pastor) giving the message; a brush arbor service to be held June 5, with former pastor, J. M. Foy, speaking; a time capsule dedication July 4 during a church-wide picnic and day of fellowship; a Jubilee revival and gospel sing, July 31-Aug. 6; and then culminating in a Jubilee Homecoming Day, Sunday, Aug. 7.

The Mother and Daughter Banquet in May also emphasizes the Year of Jubilee with its theme of "Fifty Years of Faith and Fashion."

The youth of Evergreen Church, Winston Association presented the musical, "Amazing Grace" on March 27 in the morning worship service under the direction of Wanda Dickerson and LeAnne King. At the close of the service, five of the youth accepted Christ as their Savior. Leonard Howell is pastor.



MBMC BSU holds Biblethon

Mississippi Baptist Medical Center's Baptist Student Union is raising money for missions by holding a Biblethon during April. The Medical Technology and Radiography students are asking for pledges per hour of Bible reading to help send student missionaries around the world. The BSU also held a Christmas and an Easter Concert where money was collected. Pictured collecting money from Lu Harding, center, MBMC assistant administrator, are Susan Payne, left, Medical Technology student, and Gina Osborn, radiography student and the new BSU president.

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South Mississippi Senior Adult Rally
First Baptist Church, Hattiesburg
April 29, 10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Registration and fellowship at 9:30 a.m.

Theme: *New Dimensions for Senior Adults*



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Ten Interest Conferences for Senior Adults

Entertainment at lunch time

Registration fee \$4.00 includes lunch prepared by First Baptist Church.

Reservations for lunch need to be made by noon Monday, April 25th. Phone 583-2771 or write Dr. Joel D. Ray, William Carey College, Hattiesburg, MS 39401.

Sponsored by Senior Adult Area Consultants from Areas VII, VIII, IX, and Family Ministry, MS Baptist Convention Board; Lebanon Association, and Family Ministry, Baptist Sunday School Board.

Mississippi Baptist activities

Apr. 25	Area Youth Music Leadership Conference; FBC, Greenwood; 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. (CM)
Apr. 26	Area Youth Music Leadership Conference; McLaurin Heights BC, Pearl; 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. (CM)
Apr. 28-29	Associational WMU Officers Retreat; Camp Garawa; 4 p.m., 28th-12:30 p.m., 29th (WMU)
Apr. 29-30	Area Handbell Festival-North; FBC, Tupelo; 7 p.m., 29th-2:30 p.m., 30th (CM)
Apr. 29-30	Associational WMU Officers Retreat; Camp Garawa; 4 p.m., 29th-12:30 p.m., 30th (WMU)
Apr. 30	Youth Speakers' Selection Tournament; Woodland Hills BC, Jackson; 10 a.m.-Noon (CT)
	Youth Bible Drill Selection Tournament; Woodland Hills BC, Jackson; 1:30-3 p.m. (CT)

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Jesus teaches what counts with God

By Gayle Alexander

Matthew 5:1-48

The be-happy attitudes are the qualities that result in blessedness, or happiness. Jesus is not offering rewards but stating facts. Neither is Jesus being evangelistic, but speaking to his disciples. He is not talking about different people but the same person with characteristic on an ascending scale. The first beatitude is the key to the rest. There is a logical, spiritual sequence in them. The beatitudes were contrary to Jewish thinking.

All of the character traits are a result of being poor in spirit. To recognize one's spiritual poverty and to allow Christ to meet spiritual needs is bliss. One will receive the kingdom of heaven.

There is bliss in mourning one's spiritual poverty and turning to God in complete repentance. There is bliss in a God-controlled life which is meekness, because meekness sees beyond poverty and mourning, to where strength is and begins to seek righteousness. Meekness is strength under pressure. It has to



Alexander

BIBLE BOOK

do with control of the inner spirit. The bliss of hunger and thirst means that one is seeking for what one does not have that only God can give. This comes out of a sense of emptiness and means the end of seeking to justify one's self before God.

The first four beatitudes have to do with one's relationship to himself. The bliss of perfect sympathy, or mercy, begins to move one toward others. Again, the sequence is logical. One must have a right relationship with one's self before he can have a right relationship with others. What you are (the first four) moves to what you do. The primary truth of the New Testament is that Christianity is being before doing. One of the first indicators of being right is having mercy toward others.

Purity is the bliss of an unmixed inner self and comes from hunger for righteousness. Impurity is to be all mixed up. The bliss of right relationships come to the peacemaker. Shalom, or peace, is righteousness and truth which causes right relationships. The peacemaker takes the initiative. The bliss of having an influence on the disobedient (5:10-12) comes from

those who are willing to be persecuted for righteousness sake. The fellowship of the beatitudes is the fellowship of the crucified. The peacemaker is persecuted. It is interesting to note that this carries the same promise of the kingdom as does the first one.

The bliss of influence on the obedient is seen in the description of the believer as salt and light. Jesus moved from contemplation of character to consideration of function and purpose. Light is to illumine darkness and give understanding of Christ. As salt, one is a preservative and a purifier.

Jesus answered the charge that he was seeking to destroy the law and the prophets by fulfilling them. He fulfilled the law by perfect obedience, and by paying the full penalty of the law as a substitute for sinners. The rest of this chapter gives six illustrations of how Jesus fulfilled the law. Jesus is seeking to point out the inadequacy of the external righteousness of scribes and Pharisees. Jesus moved righteousness to an inner obedience to the spirit of the law which is far beyond external righteousness.

Jesus fulfilled the law far beyond outward conformity to the prohibition against murder. Murder is an attitude and spirit that has to do

with hatred and anger. Adultery is not simply an overt act, but rather it is an attitude of lust whereby one is already guilty of the sin. Jesus affirmed God's ideal for marriage (Genesis 2:24) and clarified the intent of the Mosaic law, permitting a bill of divorce for any reason other than adultery. Moses permitted it in order to protect the women from a man's capriciousness. The form of the verb about "causing her to commit adultery" is passive and should be translated adulterated, or caused to be stigmatized as an adulteress. Hence, no adultery is involved but an unjust suspicion was brought upon the women unless she was given the bill of divorce.

On the matter of oaths, a Christian should not swear at all. The statements of a Christian should not depend upon an oath to guarantee their truthfulness. Neither are Christians to take revenge but should respond to personal injury by forgiveness and ministry to the person who brought harm. And last, a Christian is to go beyond loving one's neighbor to loving his enemy. Those who handle life in the way that Jesus has just described are those who come to perfection or maturity of the faith (5:48).

Gayle Alexander is pastor, First, Tupelo.

God's promise of rest has threefold dimension

LIFE AND WORK

By Jimmy G. McGee

Hebrews 3:12-4:2, 9-13

The word "rest" is counted 11 times in chapters 3 and 4 of Hebrews. "Rest" provides a key concept in understanding the exhortation of these verses. Link with these verses the invitation of Jesus in Matthew 11:28-29 and the promise of God in Revelation 14:13. Taking these scriptures together, "Rest" has a threefold dimension.

1. It is the rest of salvation. Jesus said, "Come unto me all you that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." This rest is the gift of God to all who believe. It is the result of God's finished work in Jesus' death on the cross. It is pictured in Hebrews 4:4 by the Sabbath rest.

2. It is the rest of living in God's will. Jesus said, "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." Submission to the Lordship of Jesus brings inward peace and joyous fellowship in victorious daily living. When we align our wills with God's will and do his truth, a rest is realized.

McGee

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This rest is the gift of God to all who believe. It is the result of God's finished work in Jesus' death on the cross. It is pictured in Hebrews 4:4 by the Sabbath rest.

3. It is the rest of heaven. A voice from heaven said, "They may rest from their labors." This rest is pictured in Hebrews 4:9, "There remains therefore a rest for the people of God." This is the rest with all things perfect in the presence of God eternally.

Genuine Christians have the assurance of the rest of salvation (past) and the rest of heaven (future). They have this by believing and trusting in the all sufficient Jesus, and they cannot lose it. Genuine Christians have the responsibility for and the opportunity of living in God's will in the present with joy and victory in service. They have this by believing — hearing and obeying God's Word. Hence God's promise of rest for the Christian is past, present, and future.

The exhortation of Hebrews 4:1, 11 focuses on the rest of living in God's will in the present. "Let us fear lest any of you seem to come short

of it." Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience."

The people of Israel were slaves in Egypt. God saved them out of the hands of the Egyptians (Exodus 14:10) and set them free from bondage. At the Red Sea, God separated Israel from Egypt in dramatic victory. Moses led them onward in God's redemptive purpose to the Promised Land. On the edge of entering Canaan, Israel balked at God's command. They stopped short of God's intended destiny and frustrated God's purpose.

The promise of God's rest for Israel meant the physical enjoyment of Canaan as their own land of development. It also meant the enjoyment of communion with God. It was this rest of living in God's will that Israel forfeited in unbelief and disobedience. This is the same rest that Christians today are in danger of forfeiting for themselves and of frustrating God's purpose of redemption.

The Christian readers of Hebrews (then and now) have been redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus and set free from the bondage of sin. They are now on the edge of the Promised Land. As Israel was responsible for conquest of the land in obedience to God's support, so are believers today. This rest of living in God's will was and is a time of testing, difficulty, and

trials, a time of choosing constantly God's truth over evil. The danger is real. Believers are tempted to default on spiritual life commitments, to give up on confession of Christ, and to go back to a life of compromise. Professing Christians are falling away and dropping out of the present rest of living in God's will. Many wander in the wilderness of defeat because of an active refusal to hear and obey God.

The good news of the Promised Land did not profit Israel as it was not mixed with faith. Always the key to entering God's blessings (rest) is faith in Christ. Two important helps are mentioned.

(1) "As partakers in Christ," believers are to "exhort one another daily" lest any become hardened through the deceitfulness of sin (3:13-14). Christians belong to each other and need to encourage each other in love and patience.

(2) The Christian's resource is the Word of God (4:12-13). The Word of God is living, energizing, penetrating, and discerning. We must allow the Word to expose us and judge our actions. Beware of an evil heart of unbelief. Many refuse to listen. Many listening, refuse to obey. We must listen to his Word, understand it, trust it, and obey it.

Jimmy G. McGee is pastor, First, Grenada.

Peace with God made possible by Jesus Christ

UNIFORM

By M. Dean Register

Peace is often an illusive butterfly: beautiful to watch and difficult to catch. Peace is a lively subject in our world, but a very demanding practice. To live in peace requires a conciliatory agreement between offended individuals, groups, or nations and a relentless determination to maintain an established trust. Given our propensity to sin it is no wonder our globe totters on the brink of destruction. But if living at peace with each

other is so hard to accomplish, how can we possibly live at peace with God?

The Apostle Paul explains that we cannot make peace with God on our own terms according to our own merit. Our peace was made possible by Jesus Christ. He says, "Therefore, being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom 5:1). This is Paul's declaration of our peace. Peace with God is not a subjective feeling or a casual state



Register

of mind. It is an accomplished act initiated by God whereby we are placed in a right relationship with him.

In other words, we are no longer at war with God. He has provided a way for our restoration. The phrase "we have peace" is sometimes translated, "Let us have peace." The former emphasizes an affirmation of peace and the latter emphasizes an exhortation to apply peace. Both translations have significance, but neither one changes the essential meaning concerning our justification through Christ. Both underscore the fact that no person can experience the peace of God without being brought to peace with God through the intermediary — Jesus Christ. The word "access" in Romans 5:2 refers to an introduction between persons, a face to face meeting. Therefore Christ is our introducer, the one who brings us face to face with God.

Having declared our peace, Paul expounds upon the results of our peace. A Christian not

only rejoices in the glory of God, but is enabled to rejoice in the midst of tribulations. Tribulation when endured by faith produces patience or perseverance. Patience in turn produces experience. The Greek word for experience refers to "approved character." This approved character subsequently leads to a confident assurance which Paul calls "hope."

The grounds for a believer's hope is the extravagant love of God — the love that has been "shed abroad in our hearts" (Rom. 5:5). God demonstrated his love to us, not because we deserved it, for in actuality we are most undeserving of his pure love (Rom. 5:8).

He demonstrated his love because he is the very essence of love and mercy. When we are in a right relationship with him, we experience the outpouring of his love, as well as the results of his peace.

Peace with God does not guarantee that we will have blissful, trouble-free lives. It does not mean that we will float ten feet above reality. Peace is not the absence of storms, but the assurance of God's never-failing presence when the storms are unleashing their fury. Joseph

Parker, the great nineteenth century preacher, expressed this truth succinctly when he said, "Out of God there is no peace, in God there is perfect peace." No matter the circumstances, I would rather be with God in a raging storm than without God on an isle of tranquillity.

The ultimate result of peace with God is the assurance of salvation (Rom. 5:9-11). Notice the three-fold nature of salvation in verse ten: we were reconciled (past tense of regeneration); are being reconciled (present tense of sanctification); and shall be saved (future tense of glorification). With unquestioned assurance Paul adds that we have received the "atonement" or the "reconciliation."

The reconciliation indicates that we have peace with God on God's terms. Through Christ, God has provided the way of reconciliation. Peace with God is both an exhilarating privilege and an humbling responsibility — a privilege because we do not deserve it and a responsibility because he has entrusted to us the "ministry of reconciliation" (II Cor. 5:18).

M. Dean Register is pastor, First, Gulfport.

THE VILLAGE VIEW

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Mr. Young
Mrs. Antonia Bates

HOUSEPARENTS

NEEDED!

Recently, Mrs. Bernice Hawkins, a dedicated Houseparent at The Village for the past five years, died. We were already in need of houseparents but this has intensified the challenge.

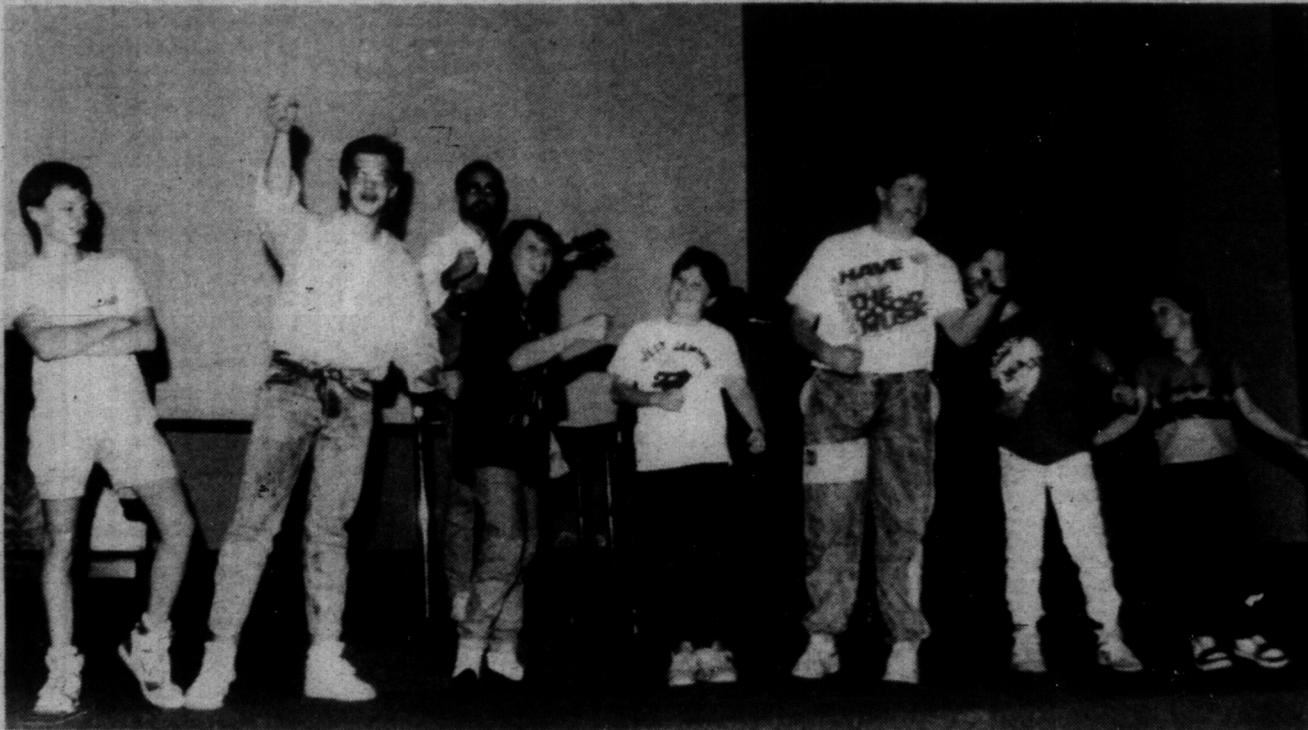


Hawkins
cottages.

Bernice always wanted to be a missionary. She answered God's call as a missionary when she came to The Village July 1, 1983. At the time of her death she was serving effectively in Alumni Cottage, one of our Chemical Dependency

Funeral services for Mrs. Hawkins were held at Trinity Baptist Church, Rosedale with burial in Beulah cemetery.

Baptist Record



Rich Malone and a group of youthful volunteers lead the music at Gulfshore during a session of Youth Missions conference. Malone is minister of youth at Parkway Church, Jackson.

Youths meet to think on missions

Story and photos by Tim Nicholas

Dean Finley remembers that when he was a teenager, his pastor stopped the televised worship service to tell Dean and his friends Ike and Billy, "If you three don't stop, I'm coming up to get you."

Said Finley to 300 teenagers at the Youth Missions Conference at Gulfshore recently, "We were not bad folks." He said that something besides God was the focus of his life.

After being cut from football and basketball teams in school, he ran track and played football. "Football became all of my life," he said. "Whatever you're into, it becomes the focus of your life."

Finley had older friends who graduated before him. His friends gone, and having a set of car keys, "I was about to bail out on the church," he said, when he heard a story about a popular football quarterback.

Someone had asked a popular high school quarterback why he carried his Bible to school. That football player had seen a friend of his carrying his Bible and asked why, hearing the response that "If you think it's so easy, try it yourself." Finley challenged the students at Gulfshore to begin carrying their Bibles to school.

He said that when he realized God wanted him to get his life straightened out, he began to carry his Bible to school. He put a New Testament in his back pocket. He wasn't planning on talking about it. But it fell out and a boy picked it up, asking what he was doing with it.

Finley told the group that although he hadn't planned on witnessing, the carrying of the Bible was a beginning and talking about Jesus actually got easier the more he did it.



Sabrina Cobb and Mendez Goldman of Cliff Temple Church, Natchez, play one of the indoor games at the Youth Missions Conference. Just about everything was indoors because it rained all weekend.



SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES Historical Commission

Finley, youth evangelism consultant for the Home Mission Board, was guest speaker for the youth meeting which attracted more than 300 high school students.



Terry Dent, with beard, a former Journeyman, leads a missionary "family" group where the students had opportunities to get to know the missionaries.



Powerline for teens

"I don't like to be hugged"

QUESTION

A big deal is made these days about touching and hugging all the time. They say you need hugs to be psychologically healthy. I don't really like all that touching. Is there something wrong with me?

ANSWER

Your letter points up an important principle in human relationships; that we must be willing to let all persons be themselves and to respond according to their own inner needs or feelings.

Of course, this does not mean that everybody just "does what comes naturally," because part of

being civilized means that we curb our impulses to act in thoughtless or antisocial ways. People with bad tempers need to learn to be patient. Persons who are shy need to develop more self-confidence. All of us need to learn to express love and genuine concern for each other.

But that doesn't mean there is only one way to express love. More outgoing types may give you a big bear-hug. A firm handshake accompanied by a warm smile and a look in the eyes which says, "My, I'm glad to see you!" may mean just as much when it comes from a person who normally is more reserved. The important thing is to know yourself and feel comfortable with responding in a genuine manner, to be open and willing to accept the other person according to his or her own special personality traits.

SOUTHERN BAPTIST RADIO-TV COMMISSION / FORT WORTH, TX 76150

Pressler: Southern will avoid Southeastern-type controversy

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — Southern Seminary will not experience the type of controversy that has raged at its sister school in North Carolina, Paul Pressler predicted.

Pressler, an appeals court judge from Houston and a leader of Southern Baptist conservatives, told students the Louisville, Ky., seminary would avoid a major administrative shake-up because of "realistic efforts" by seminary President Roy L. Honeycutt to hire conservative faculty members.

In October, Southeastern Seminary President W. Randall Lolley and Dean Morris Ashcraft announced their resignations in response to actions taken by the Wake Forest, N.C., school's board of trustees to ensure that only people who profess biblical inerrancy will be hired for faculty

positions. Several other administrators also submitted their resignations.

"I don't think you're going to have the situation at Southern that you had at Southeastern because of the leadership of Dr. Honeycutt," Pressler said at an April 13 meeting of the seminary's Student Evangelical Forum.

The guidelines set forth by trustees at Southeastern for hiring faculty there were a "corrective measure," Pressler said, noting the policies were a "way to balance" the faculty with people who held "traditional Southern Baptist beliefs."

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Baptist Record

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901 COMMERCE ST
NASHVILLE

Macao forms own mission

MACAO — The 18 Southern Baptist missionaries assigned to historic Macao officially began their own mission organization in January after a long attachment to the Baptist mission in Hong Kong.

Macao, the Portuguese colony just south of Hong Kong on the China coast, was the entry point for both the first Protestant missionary, Robert Morrison in 1807, and first Southern Baptist missionaries, Lewis and Shuck in 1836, to work in China under Portuguese control for more than four centuries. Macao will be returned to Chinese rule in 1999.

"The association was established to serve churches." — Gerald Palmer